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# Depot Town Rag

Volume 14, Number 2 *"All the news in one block in one month."*

A Publication of the DEPOT TOWN ASSOCIATION, INC. The Old Caboose, 400 Market Place, Ypsilanti, MI 48198

**100% FREE Rag content**
**February 1991**

- Pronunciation problems
- Air Lift history
- Winter survey
- *Love letters*

. . . and other strictly local stuff

## Unpronounceable? We've *always* said it that way!

Yipsi Landy? Oooh, how we Ypsilantians hate to hear other people mispronounce our City's lovely name! Some folks put the emphasis on the first syllable and add a little "yip" to it. And we shiver at other - worse - abominations of the fine old Greek moniker.

We've come to love to hear Ann Arborites call us "Ypsitucky." It's a down-home image we can live with. In fact, it's quite comfortable. Maybe they need some of that warmth in *Anns' Arbor*? We're always ready to share.

But what do we do to some of our other unique local names? How must those citizens in Milan, Italy, feel when they hear what we call their Michigan namesake? "My -Lin" is a far cry from "Mi-Lan´" (as in Ypsilanti's former Milano Pizza).

We say "Suh-Lean´" when crackers and salty solutions are pronounced "Say´-lean." That's no solution, is it?

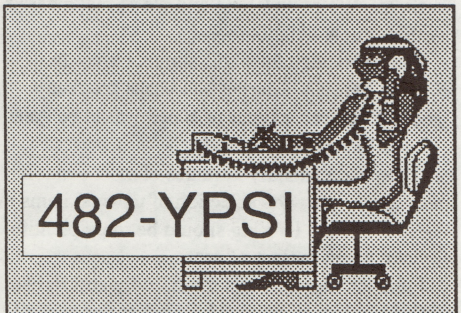
And no self respecting Indian would recognize that Metro Park out west of Ann Arbor. "Del´-High" is distinctly different from "Del´-Ee" or "New Del´-Ee," India. What about opening a delicatessen just outside the park which specializes in Indian cuisine and calling it "The Delhi Deli - catessen?" Some wag would undoubtedly add, "Lavender blue, dilly, dilly!"

Ft. Lauderdale's Bellefontaine Hotel is pronounced "Bell Fountain!" but, then, it's not the Radisson, is it?

It probably won't be long now until someone from Louisville, Kentucky ("Lou'-Vul" to *them*!) comes along and tells us we've been pronouncing "Rawsonville" wrong all these years.

## "Happy Birthday" to the Old Caboose

The biggest, reddest Valentine in Ypsilanti will celebrate it's 10th birthday on February 14 - the day that marks the Caboose's arrival in Ypsilanti. After more than eighty years on the Grand Trunk Western line through Michigan and Ontario, the all-wood caboose was retired to the Ford Motor Company yards at Melvindale where it was parked indoors as a private office for 15 years. From there, it came to Ypsilanti's DepotTown to serve as the headquarters for neighborhood meetings and events since 1980. See rental info on page 4.




## Merchants' Committee establishes telephone *HOT LINE*

The front of Depot Exchange may offer up many antique artifacts, but the back room is decidedly high tech . . . with the tape-recorded phone line (482-YPSI) offering up recent facts about district events, specials and calendar items. A follow-up phone number can get live information, as well, with even more information of neighborhood news.

Give us a call. It's a local as you can get!

## STOP everything; we're in Ypsilanti!

That seems to be the new master plan for Ypsilanti and environs. Maybe it was the train gate going down in Depot Town that gave everybody else the idea of stopping the traffic in their blocks, too. Several times a day a black-and-white striped wooden arm (with flashing red lights on it, even!) swings down across the intersection at Cross and River Streets and makes all the traffic stop while freight or passenger trains trundle through the crossing. Many of the drivers stop long enough to look around, park somewhere close by, and walk through the district. Some just leave their vehicles in the street. Either way, most of them find their way into the neighborhood's restaurants, specialty shops and other attractions.

Township officials, when they were made aware of the phenomena, had the state install stop lights along the highway in front of new strip malls, hoping to entice shoppers to dodge into the adjoining parking lots and walk to the cement block malls beyond. Some did.

Many City residents have petitioned to have stop signs installed at every intersection of their neighborhood, hoping to create a 'Depot Town ambiance' where folks stop along their route and converse in a friendly manner. Some locals have gone so far as to put stop signs at the end of their own driveways to give a Big City feel to their digs. A few subdivisions have grouped their mailboxes, hoping to meet some of their neighbors *in-person*. Soon Depot Towners, heading to a friend's home on Ypsi's west side, may find it more convenient and faster to drive I-94 to Ann Arbor and take a taxi back to their destination.

Downtowners showed their apprehensions when the new College of Business Giant Waterslide installed its own parking structure out back. "Will they ever use the front door?" asked one local business person, hoping some of the Business Administration majors might find their way into her place of business. Maybe they'll need stop signs along the sidewalks, too?

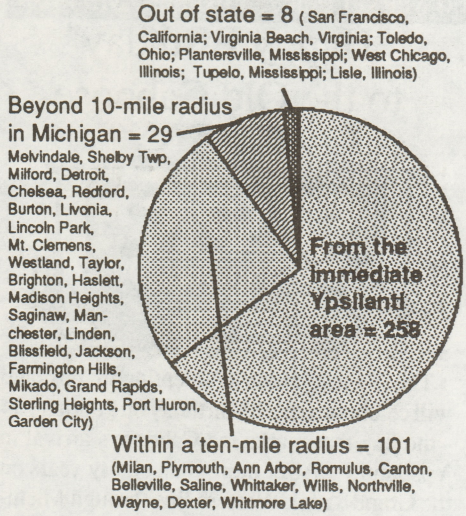
## December Shoppers' Survey polls 403 Depot Towners

# Who shops in Depot Town?

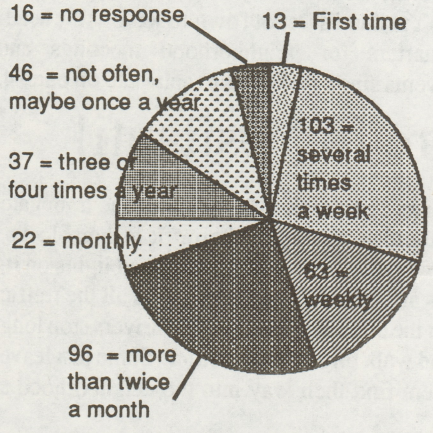
Seventeen district businesses cooperated in the little-more-than-a-month survey of their clientele's local habits with some gathering as many as 71 responses, and others as few as two responses. **Jennifer Wheaton, Ken Stewart** and **Marcia Coffey's** names were drawn to receive prizes of dinner for two, at Aubree's Saloon, the Old Town and the Sidetrack.

**Women respondents vastly outnumbered the men in the survey: 319 to 84**

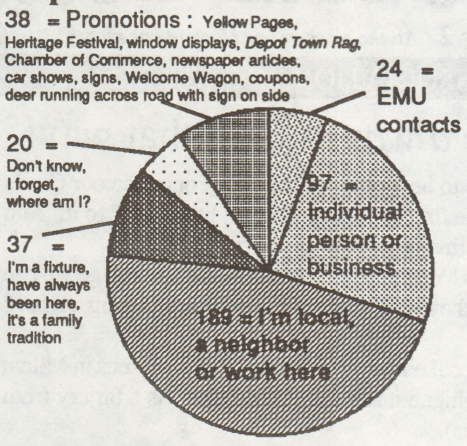
## Who were all those people down in Ypsilanti's railroad district last December?


Out of state = 8 ( San Francisco, California; Virginia Beach, Virginia; Toledo, Ohio; Plantersville, Mississippi; West Chicago, Illinois; Tupelo, Mississippi; Lisle, Illinois)
Beyond 10-mile radius in Michigan = 29
Melvindale, Shelby Twp, Milford, Detroit, Chelsea, Redford, Burton, Livonia, Lincoln Park, Mt. Clemens, Westland, Taylor, Brighton, Haslett, Madison Heights, Saginaw, Manchester, Linden, Blissfield, Jackson, Farmington Hills, Mikado, Grand Rapids, Sterling Heights, Port Huron, Garden City)
From the immediate Ypsilanti area = 258
Within a ten-mile radius = 101
(Milan, Plymouth, Ann Arbor, Romulus, Canton, Belleville, Saline, Whittaker, Willis, Northville, Wayne, Dexter, Whitmore Lake)

## How often do you come to Depot Town?

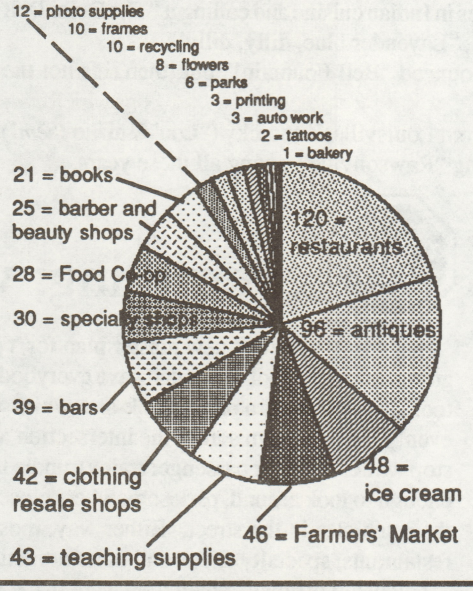

16 = no response
13 = First time
46 = not often, maybe once a year
37 = three or four times a year
22 = monthly
103 = several times a week
63 = weekly
96 = more than twice a month

## How did you hear about Depot Town/this business?


38 = Promotions : Yellow Pages, Heritage Festival, window displays, Depot Town Rag, Chamber of Commerce, newspaper articles, car shows, signs, Welcome Wagon, coupons, deer running across road with sign on side
24 = EMU contacts
20 = Don't know, I forget, where am I?
37 = I'm a fixture, have always been here, it's a family tradition
97 = individual person or business
189 = I'm local, a neighbor or work here

## What are you here for?

**Is there one specific type of business you come to visit ( restaurant, antiques, etc.)?**




## What they're saying about this old neighborhood:

**General comments from the survey: Things you like — things you don't like.**

I do like the uniqueness of Depot Town. Now that I live in Ypsilanti, I can enjoy seeing the "Festival of Lights" that I've heard so highly of.

I like the hospitality.

The prices are reasonable.

I like the variety. Dislike? Some things seem very overpriced.

I truly appreciate the helpfulness of the staff!

Shopkeeper was very helpful and pleasant.

Wish they would put a restaurant in the old depot.

I miss the monthly auctions.

I enjoy the atmosphere, restaurants, shops and friendly salespeople.

I like the Christmas light show, the Farmers' Market, the atmosphere of the place.

I enjoy the old atmosphere, close parking, unique shops, Festival of Lights.

Love the concept and we love used bookstores!

This book store is a great idea!

I like Depot Town.

I always come to Bell, Book and Candle. The only shop close in this area. I love it!

I like the availability of parking.

I like this type of business, don't like parking situation.

Plenty of parking space.

Parking is tight!

Love the ease in parking. . . and the friendliness of the area.

Great little 'town,' family-oriented, great atmosphere.

Great place to walk around.

Depot Town and the park are really nice to walk in. We're new here and we're real pleased with our new neighborhood.

The streetside tables this summer were fun!

I like Farmers' Market and shops are pretty good. Even more types of shops would be great.

Love Depot Town!

Appreciate friendly attitudes of *most* vendors and appreciate wide selection of unusual items in various stores. Parking should be more plentiful.

Love warm feeling of area.

I like the bargains and the friendly atmosphere.

I would like to see maybe a bakery or general store, kids' book store or candy shop - something for fun, family oriented. [Continued next page]


At the Ypsilanti Farmers' Market -Wednesdays & Saturdays:

MESSINA'S CHEESE
At the Ypsilanti Farmers' Market
Wed or Sat 483-1480 or 459-1995 any time
Continuing low prices for AMISH CHICKENS
Bring in ad for 10c off per lb.

J U D Y ' S
1st CLASS FARE
- Gourmet Coffee Beans whole or freshly ground
- Fresh Cut Flowers
- Rocky Top Jams & Non Alcoholic Sparkling Wines
- Uncle Bum's Romesco Sauce

Saturdays at the Farmers' Market

Depot Town Sourdough Bakery
310 N. River St. 313-487-8110

**[Love letters continued from page 2]**

Location, friendly people, not crowded. Great atmosphere, nice businesses.

I like Depot Town very much.

Always enjoy Depot Town. I think there's a market for more live music, maybe a dance hall.

I like the small town feel of this area and the friendliness of the people here.

Your service is great!!!

I wish we could see more shops with old and unusual items in Depot Town.

I like the different shops.

Have seen a *lot* of improvements in the last 5 years. Keep up the good work!

Wish there were more quaint shops and boutiques!

I love Depot Town and its ambience!

Healthful foods, independently run businesses, friendly atmosphere.

Love this town.

Full bakery, open daily, would be a nice improvement.

Do what you can to keep this part of downtown Ypsi alive.

People are always friendly here.

Depot Town's the best part of Ypsilanti.

Need more small shops. A general store would be great.

I enjoy the area.

We like cards and sundaes.

This is a lovely store. The fixtures wonderful!

I like the fact that there are no fast food restaurants down here.

I grew up in Depot Town and like it!

Very nice. I enjoyed it a lot.

Likes: owner. Dislikes: none.

This shop is *hip*!

I love Depot Town. Thanks for Christmas.

I like the idea of finding unique things.

I like the smell and the music in BB&C, also the no-pressure atmosphere and sell.

I'm planning to open my own business here.

I like the sense of community the the Depot Town area.

I like the personality and "personal-ness" of Depot Town.

(The ice cream) flavors are good.

I like small towns.

I like the coffee shop. And plenty of bars.

I like the atmosphere around Depot Town. People are friendly. I appreciate the effort to restore and regenerate Depot Town. I also appreciate the historical value of this area.

I like everything about Depot Town, except I wish there was an *in*-expensive food place here!

It is nice to see things improving.

I like the friendly people.

I'd like Aubree's to reopen its upstairs for private/public parties.

I like Ike's Barber Shop even though I don't go there. Ike's a cool guy. I love Depot Town!!

I don't like the deer running across the road, obstructing traffic.

I like Depot Town mainly because it shows the real Ypsilanti.

What has been done in this area is great! I love Ypsilanti!

**The survey continues this month. . . .**

## a PATCHWORK of commercial creativity -- *Depot Town!*

*Trade a Paperback for one of Barb's for only 70c plus tax! Crazy!*

**Crazy Barb's**
Paperback Book Exchange!

Mon-Sat 11am-6:00pm
50 East Cross **484-4564**

**Teachers Shop & LEARNING CENTER, LTD.**

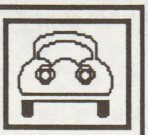
YOUR K12 CONNECTION
all materials for CLASSROOMS & CURRICULA

**482-6373**
16 E. CROSS STREET
YPSILANTI, MI. 48198

**Aubree's**

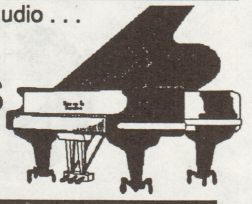
*Pool is Cool*
39 East Cross Street
BAR

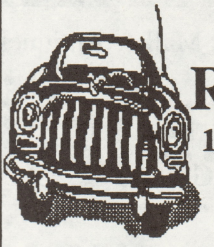
**T E D'S Auto Electric**



307 North River • 483-1238

in my Depot Town studio . . .
PIANO LESSONS
*Steve Gustafson*
485-3765





**City Radiator**
100 North River
483-2248

**CITY BODY**
20 East Cross Street

Front end alignment & Collision repair

MYOMASSOLOGIST
***Joan M. Scully***
Massage Therapy

**434-5317**
Recovery Oriented• Women's Issues
Stress Relief • Therapeutic Massage
Reflexology
*Gift Certificates available*

**The Depot Town Association**

is a nonprofit, tax exempt corporation dedicated to preserving the unique character and history of the Depot Town area and to ensuring the economic growth and stablity of the area.

Cut out and mail to:
DTA, 400 Market Place,
Ypsilanti, MI, 48198.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ ZIP _____
__ Associate member $10.
__ Business/Property member $25.
__ Sustaining member $100.
__ Please mail *The Rag*. __I'll pick it up.

Cable TV & Video games FREE Delivery

**Red Rooster Pizza**
. . . and Dairy Bar
37 East Cross • 483-4555

# Depot Town Association, Inc. January 17, 1991

**Guests:** Kathy and Mike Schmidt from the Ypsilanti Food Co-op; Linda Yohn, musical director, WEMU; Steve VanSteenhuyse, Ypsilanti City Planner. (Apologies for grossly mispelling Steve's name in last month's minutes.)

**Minutes of December** were corrected. Treasury balance was actually $3347.12.

**Current treasury balance:** $1579.38. Past treasury books are not accessible. Bill French will explore options. There are still bills outstanding from the Heritage Jazz competition.

It was agreed that the Treasurer not be allowed to pay any bills not approved at a DTA meeting or by written notice or by three members of the Steering Committee. Constitutional bylaws were reviewed.

**Communications:** EMU Marketing Department's Dr. R. Rodman Ludlow has submitted a **Depot Town Marketing Plan** and objectives for consideration of the membership and the neighborhood. Copies will also be made available and excerpts printed in *The Rag*.

Gary Urich, of the Farmers' Market/Freighthouse, has written DTA regarding future **planning of events** for that facility.

**Membership** chair, Bonni Rosen-Fine, reports nine new or renewing memberships (See box this page).

**The Cookie Contest** is set for Saturday, March 2, with standards printed with this issue. The March 2 event will also constitute the Association's Quarterly Meeting.

Rex Richie reports the **DTA/Ark contract** has been referred to an attorney for review.

DTA's **Freighthouse committee** has met regarding possible intern management for events, administration, insurance, rental agreements and more. Dialog has begun and will continue into February. City official and Market manager, Gary Urich, has been interested and helpful.

**The Blues and Jazz Concert** is scheduled for Saturday, April 20, with a $4000 budget set. Carolyn McKeever and Linda Yohn are soliciting proposals from performers and volunteers. A possible review of recent Heritage Jazz winners is being considered.

**WEMU's Linda Yohn** reported that the bank which had encouraged DTA to ask for support of Heritage Jazz has backed out. Also, the Gilbey's grant for jazz sponsorship was not successful, being one of 175 applications for only 13 awards in that category. Her hopes for a WCA mini grant seem slim with the Governor proposing cuts in ALL appropriations for the arts in Michigan.

The Merchants' Committee **shoppers' survey results** are printed with this issue. Thanks to the 17 businesses which helped to collect the valuable data.

CBC and DTA have professed interest in helping to run the **Gus Macker Tournament** in May. Up to 2000 teams are expected for the second such event in Ypsilanti and principals are investigating placing courts on Michigan Avenue, in the Washington Street parking lot and in Depot Town. Negotiations of interest continue.

The Merchants' **30-second Cable TV ad** is in the final stages of editing, sponsored by 26 participating businesses and running on local cable for 13 weeks.

President Bill will establish a **"Welcoming Committee"** to introduce new neighborhood businesses to the Association and its programs.

**482-YPSI is the new information hot line** established by DTA with a recorded message calendar of events which may be followed by further information and a local directory. Steve Gross of the Depot Exchange is handling its installation and operation.

**Fund Raiser ideas** are solicited for discussion at the Association's February meeting.

Rex Richie has sent out ***Rag* bills** giving the option of paying annually, semi-annually, or quarterly. Response from sponsors has been excellent. A possible once-a-month special ad placement is being considered which will cover the higher cost of initial set-up and design.

**Responsibility** for three major district projects was taken:

Replication of the **Signal Tower** - Tom Dodd.

Creation of a district **calendar** of events - Carolyn McKeever.

Further development of the **Depot Town 5-year business plan** - A. William French.

**The Best Yet Awards:**

- to Tee, of the Red Rooster, for the development and addition of a convenience store in his popular ice cream and pizza eatery.

- to Frieda Amman, probably the district's longest continuing resident, as she moves from her 20-year home in the Masonic Block to her Chidester Place penthouse. Good luck, Freida. Depot Town loves ya!

**New or renewing DTA members:**

Will & Bea Otis
John Waite
Peter Murdock
Linda Klenczar
Marian Novak
Teachers Shop
Oney Properties (Ivan & Margaret Harner)
Aubree's Saloon
Don & Beverly Shankwiler


**THE DEPOT TOWN RAG**

A publication of the Depot Town Association, Inc. a nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation dedicated to preserving the unique character of the neighborhood and to the enhancement of its business climate.

-Tom Dodd, editor

**The Depot Town Association, Inc.**
**A. William French, president**
c/o The Old Caboose
400 Market Place
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48198

**Active Memberships :**
- Ypsilanti Chamber of Commerce
- Washtenaw Council for the Arts
- Neighborhood Associations of Michigan

($25 + $10 refundable deposit)
**Call 483-4256.**


## February 1991

Depot Towners are invited to participate in any or all of the following activities for the good of this old commercial district:

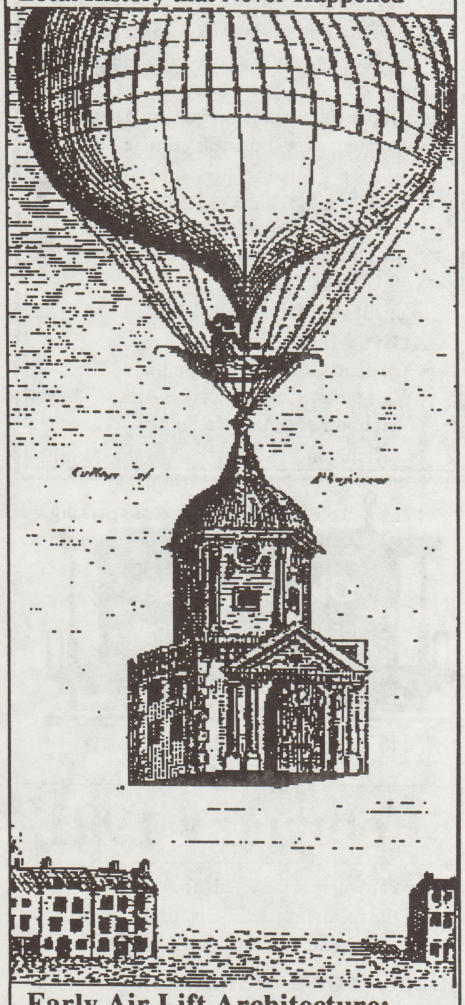
**Depot Town Association**
21st , 7:30 p.m. Thursday,
The Old Caboose

**Depot Town Antique Engine Club**
28th, 7:00 p.m. Thursday,
Freighthouse Coffeeshop

**Depot Town Development Authority (DDA)**
April 11, 1991
Freighthouse Coffeeshop


*Hansen's*
Standard Printing
"In the Heart of Depot Town"
**483-0339**
Call Us For A Quote

## Edifice Complex:
### Local History that Never Happened



### Early Air Lift Architecture:

Before the Erie Canal and the Michigan Central Railroad, Ypsi's soon-to-be-historic buildings had to be brought in by hot air balloons. The towers on several churches in town were actually assembled in Ontario and floated to Ypsilanti by descendants of Jules Verne.

The famous water tower was not the feat many imagined, since the interior was simply filled with helium to add to the structure's bouyancy. Residents still complain of traces of the gas in the water supply, but their voices quickly return to normal with no ill effects.

## 1991 Depot Town quilt theme — a blanket policy?
## "Just say KNOW" policy continues

The end of the Eighties saw a federal "Just say 'No'" campaign try to alter the flow of drugs in America with little measure of success, but Depot Town's age-old "Just say 'KNOW'" tradition is destined to be one of the most successful merchandising traditions in the industry today.

• **"Know your business,"** say both the newer and the second, third, and fourth generation shops and businesses in the district. It's not unusual to meet the experts in this block of unique specialties and the person behind the counter is, more often than not, the owner of the business. There's none of that anonymous mall mentality in seasoned commercial districts like Depot Town. When's the last time you had the service of a full-time salesperson at one of the major discount houses around the county?

• **"Know your customers."** "Call them by their names, and, if you don't know them already, *get* to know them!" say experienced business people on the block. Many of the businesses in the district have customer mailing lists which date back to their first months in business. Slick slogans don't slide easily from the tongues of such business folks and no one wears name tags with folksy, printed slogans on them. "Pleases" and "Thank-yous" are commonplace and it's terribly obvious that the waitpersons are truly "happy to serve you!" even without a shiny plastic badge proclaiming the concept.

• **"Know your product."** When people shop and eat in an older commercial district like Depot Town, they expect us to be the experts in the field. Whether it's auto repair work, printing, food specialties, imports, jewelry, antiques, photography, or any number of things found in our businesses, Depot Towners are enjoying success because they're good at what they do. That's why they went into the business in the first place and that's why they're still doing business so effectively.

• **"Know you neighborhood."** Lots of folks who come to Depot Town do so because they enjoy the ambience and traditions which come with maturity and historical perspective. Depot Towners are known to revel in their history — no matter how long they've been here. Instant traditions pop up and last as long as they're useful to the life of the neighborhood. It's every bit as good as 'the old days.'

• **"Know your neighbors, too."** Small town America *lives* in places like this. Sure, everybody knows everybody's business. And our main business is doing business with each other. Maybe that's why so many people call themselves 'Depot Towners' today. It's not just a name for the owners and workers; it's also the moniker which most 'regulars' apply to themselves, as well.

Depot Town's **"Just say KNOW"** campaign continues into a new decade of success.

## WANTED:

Cookie Monsters and Cookie Makers to participate in Depot Town's

## Cookie of the Year Contest

**March 2, 1991: Bring entries to the Farmers' Market 10 - noon**

$5 entry fee for 2 dozen cookies
in a non-returnable container
with typed or printed recipe

**Criteria:** *Simply DELICIOUS*

Winners announced at 3pm

3-4 pm: Cookie Party for DTA members.

**Grand Prize:**
Turn-of-the-Century
BAKING CUPBOARD

All contestants will become DTA members for a year!

For more information, to pre-register or to volunteer to help judge (Cookie Monsters!) call *The Cookie People* at 482-3463.

Entry forms at Depot Town businesses.

## At the Farmers' Market this month:

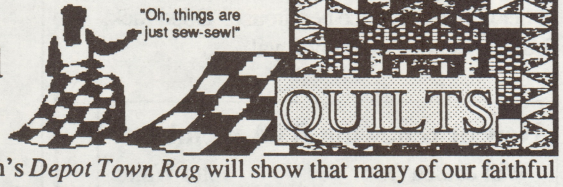
February 2 **Potpourri Workshop**
Smell the essential oils and blend your own. Phone 455-8602 to register.

February 9 **Valentine's Craft Show**
Craft and gift items for all ages.

February 16 **Train Day**
Displays, videos, activities celebrating train fun and safety.

February 23 **Rag-Time Day**
Choose from over 175 player piano rolls and peddle away.

## Quilt theme expolited by local sponsors




A quick perusal of this and last month's *Depot Town Rag* will show that many of our faithful sponsors have taken advantage of the 1991 Quilt Theme for the district and incorporated the concept into their monthly contribution. More such examples are encouraged, whether it be through visual design, text, or simply a border which simulates another "patch" in the creative patchwork of Ypsilanti's historic Depot Town.

If you're looking for help or ideas on this creative project, call the editor at 482-6371 and he'll be happy to sew in a few stitches for your patch.

## YPSI FOOD COOP

Bulk Herbs, Spices, Teas, & Coffees

Fresh produce, Amish Chicken, Organic Beef

312 N. River St.

*Open every day*

Sunday 12-5; M,T,Th, F 10-7; Wed. 10-9; Sat. 9-7

**483-1520**

# A DEPOT TOWN SAMPLER

FOOD • FUN • ANTIQUES

24-hour *Hot Line:*

Call: 482-YPSI

for information on

Ypsilanti's historic Depot Town!

Old Photos Reproduced

B&W/Color Printing, Double Prints

IMAGE PHOTO LAB

Mon. thru Fri. 10 to 6, Sat. 10 to 3

Michael Leach — Toni McCarthy

**11 East Cross** — **482-3370**

## BELL, BOOK & CANDLE

**44 E. Cross St. • 487-1970**

## COUNT ON KELLY

**FOR QUALIFIED TEMPORARY HELP**

√Office Clerical
√Personal Computer
√Word Processing
√Data Entry
√Accounting
√Light Industrial
√Marketing
√Technical Support

**Ann Arbor - 761-5700 • Ypsilanti - 482-7749**

KELLY SERVICES — The Kelly Girl® People

## KATRINA'S HAIR STUDIO

*Featuring*
**KATRINA'S COSMETICS**

483-3644

Matrix-Paul Mitchell

## J&R Trading Post Mall & Antiques

Old New In between — Records — Hats — Old fashioned candy

Jewelry — Mini mall — Gifts — Snacks Cards Glassware

**21 East Cross • 483-5870**

## RIVER ARTWORKS

**PROFESSIONAL CUSTOM FRAMERS**

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48 EAST CROSS STREET

*in Historic Depot Town*

**QUALITY• TIMELY SERVICE**

## Hon's

Flowers & Fancies

**46 East Cross**

**482-2124**

A friendly, family kind of place

## Olde Towne Coin & Gold

**24 East Cross**

*We buy & sell coins, 14K jewelry*

**ANA member - appraisals**

**Mich. Jewelers Assn.**

**483-6155**

## Esquire Custom Drapery & Blinds

Custom Draperies
Vertical Blinds • 1" Blinds
Shutters • Shades • Wallpaper
Installation • Repairs

**Ann Arbor 663-7011**

**Ypsilanti 482-6338**

10 E. Cross St. Ypsilanti, MI 48198

## THOMPSON BUILDING MALL

*Antiques and Stained Glass*

**412 North River • 483-3472**

Buying & Selling of Estates and/or Single Items

## Ike's Depot Barbershop

**40 East Cross**

Now that we'verecycled everything else in the neighborhood, isn't it time we recycled this copy of *The Rag*?

## River Street Antiques

306 North River Street

487-4580

*Our specialty: decorating with antiques*

## Our Little Secret

**Resale Clothing & Other Niceties**

***23 E. Cross Street***

**483-3637**

**Membership opportunity:**

(Membership has its privileges: See the Cookie Monster Special on page 2!)